

exclusion from the rest of the world, have, in all probability, preserved their religious rites unchanged for fifteen centuries. Mr. Salt, an English Consul, who visited that country, has furnished a minute account of the baptism of a Mohammedan boy, at which he was present. He tells us that they first stripped the lad of all his clothing, and "washed him all over very carefully in a large basin of water," which stood outside of the church. He was taken to another place, where was a smaller font. Here "the head priest laid hold of him, dipping his own hand in the water, and crossed him on the forehead, pronouncing at the same moment, 'George I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' The whole company then knelt down, and joined in reciting the Lord's Prayer." p. 152.

Here, in all probability, is the precise mode of baptism which existed in the Church of Alexandria, in the fourth century. It is seen at once, that the Jewish ablution was a mere preparation for the baptism, which was administered by a different person, from a different font, and with different words. Mr. C. Taylor, to whom the writer of this article is indebted for some valuable suggestions, concludes his investigation of the subject as follows:—"Therefore, whoever adopts immersion without pouring, may certainly claim all the credit due to the revival of an ancient Jewish ceremony, signifying death; but Christian baptism, signifying life, they do not practice."

CAUSE OF THE COLD WEATHER.—Under this head a late number of the St. Louis Republican furnishes the following conjectures:

It is singular that the unprecedented cold weather which has prevailed over the whole country during the present month of April, should not have attracted the attention of the press and the public to the probable cause. This is undoubtedly the presence and rapid approach of the comet now visible in the evening sky, whose elements have been calculated by the most celebrated astronomers of Europe, and which it is predicted by certain highly respectable mathematicians of Germany, will come in direct collision with the earth on the 10th of June proximo. This opinion has been made light of by Pierce and other American astronomers, but whether probable or not, there is no questioning the fact that the comet has entered the limits of the solar system, and is now approaching the earth with fearful rapidity, as may be seen by the most casual observer, by noticing its daily increase in size.

There can be little doubt that the extraordinary phenomena witnessed in the weather during the month is attributable to this cause. Similar changes in the climate have been observed before during the passage of comets near the earth.—The comet of 1856 is said to have brought with it a dense and unpleasant fog which lasted for twenty-one days; that of 1826 was accompanied by heavy rains and consequent inundations; and every one must remember the unusually cold and severe weather prevalent at the time of the appearance of the brilliant comet of March, 1843. The comet now approaching the earth is that of Charles V., which first appeared in perihelion in 1264. It may be seen in a clear evening near B. Sagittari, and is evidently nearing the earth with great rapidity.

News Department.

Extracts from latest English Papers.

ENGLAND.

On Thursday afternoon, 14th ult., the Westminster branch of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel held its annual general meeting at Will's-rooms, King street, St. James's. His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury presided, and there were also present the Bishops of London, Durham, Oxford, Chichester, Carlisle, Llandaff, Bath and Wells, Hereford, St. Asaph, Salisbury, Lichfield, Kentucky, Victoria, Antigua, Jamaica, and Rupert's Land; the Earl of Carnarvon, Rev. Lord J. Teynne, the Rev. T. Caldwell, of Madras; the Very Rev. Dean Newman, of Cape Town; the Deans of Westminster and Canterbury; Canon Wordsworth, the Master of the Temple, Mr. Justice Coleridge, and many of the chief metropolitan clergy. The proceedings having been opened with prayer, the most rev. chairman briefly addressed the meeting, urging upon its serious consideration the eternal importance of the great labour in which the society was engaged, and called upon all to take their part in the missionary work which was spreading the name and Gospel of the Lord throughout the land. The Earl of Carnarvon moved the first resolution, which besought the Church at large for new and increased efforts, to sustain the missionary efforts of the

society, and enable it to meet an annual loss of £10,000, which the discontinuance of the collection under the Queen's letter had occasioned it. The Bishop of London seconded the resolution, and said he quite agreed with the expectations of the noble lord that no great evil could arise to the efficiency of the society by the withdrawal of the sum gained from the Queen's letters. It but required that the society should throw itself openly and without reserve upon the good feelings of the members of the Church of England—unfolding the great field of its labours before them—and they would gain a far larger sum in voluntary aid than they had ever gained from the instruction of a Royal letter. Let them look to the general mass of the Church of England—the people in whose hearts he was sure the Church was daily taking a deeper root—and in them the society would find its strength to carry out and extend still farther its missionary operations through the heathen dependencies of Great Britain. The resolution having been carried *nem. con.* the Bishop of Oxford proposed the second, pledging the meeting to support and further the efforts for the spread of the Gospel in India and the East, where a large and immediate increase in the number of missionary labourers were sorely needed:—

The Right Rev. prelate spoke at some length, and with great eloquence and power, urging the responsibilities of our position as governors of India, where we had a population of upwards of 184,000,000 under the government of the crown, with an additional 10,000,000 under its protection, as it was termed. It was high time that something was done with these souls. In 1814 the see of Calcutta was founded; but what a see was it! A see larger than the whole of the United Kingdom, with a population of 136,000,000 intrusted to the overlooking of one man, who, having a conscience, called loudly for assistance and a subdivision of his diocese. Situated as he was now he was the Bishop of a diocese, half of which he could never see, of a clergy he could not advise, of a flock to whom he could not preach. To speak of that as the see of Calcutta was to pass off a fraud upon the pious sensibilities of the English people. Let them have more Bishops in India, Bishops in the north as well as the south, and he was glad and happy to believe that in a brief time Agra would be formed into a see, with a Bishop of its own. Once they got Bishops they would soon get clergy, and with clergy came all the means of grace which so many of the natives wished for, and under the shadow of which they longed to sit in quiet. The Rev. R. Caldwell, of Madras, seconded the resolution, bearing high testimony to the happy results of the society's labours in the East. He instanced Tinnevely, in which province Christian congregations had been established in no less than 627 villages, and 42,000 men, women, and children converted, of whom 4,900 were communicants, and 10 Hindoos had also been admitted by ordination to the ministry. This happy result—much of which was due to the efforts of the Church Missionary Society—was, however, by no means a solitary instance of the spread of the Gospel in the East. The resolution was carried unanimously. Other speakers also addressed the meeting in support of its objects, and the proceedings terminated with the usual formalities, and a cordial vote of thanks to the most rev. chairman, which was carried by acclamation. A collection in aid of the funds of the Society was made at the doors, and was liberally responded to.

The Turkish Missions Aid Society held its anniversary the day before. The Earl of Shaftesbury was to have presided but did not arrive till half the proceedings were over, the noble lord, whose function as chairman-general of the May meetings must be anything but a sinecure, being absent at another similar gathering. The report congratulated the society on the recent reforms in the direction of religious liberty which had been decreed in Turkey, the return to office of Redschid Pacha, the Minister most likely to carry them out, and the projected establishment of the Euphrates railways. The Armenian mission of this society comprises 13 stations and 18 out stations, at which are employed 24 American missionaries and 81 native assistants. In Constantinople, the central station, the report stated there were five churches, 10 "preaching places," and 7 free schools; the collective Sabbath congregations numbered 593. The past year had been rendered memorable by the ordination of the first Mohammedan convert, Mr. Williams (Selim Agha). The issues from the Constantinople press last year were 19,639 books and 8,300 tracts: "the religious press was as free in Turkey as it was in England." The Nestorian mission had been subjected to the fiercest persecution by the Persian Government, instigated by "two dissolute Bishops of the old Nestorian Church;" but this persecution had now ceased. The report concluded with some remarks in reference to a proposed new mission to Bulgaria. General Sir W. F. Williams, of Kars, was the principal speaker; he spoke very highly of the American missionaries. The Earl of Shaftesbury, in his

speech, attributed the slow progress of Christianity in the Eastern minds to the "pomp and ceremonies" which had been attached to it:—

I do hope and trust that the exhibition of pure Christianity, of simple, evangelical religion, unaccompanied by all those pomps and ceremonies, by all those mischievous forms, and splendours, and pageantries, which have disgraced Christianity in the minds of the simple Easterns, which have been a greater cause of its retardation than all the obstacles raised against it by power, by argument, by ignorance, and by everything else; so that nominal Christians are more to blame than the heathen for Christianity not having been diffused through the length and breadth of the world. I do hope and trust, I say, that, under the blessing of God, the exhibition of His pure Word, with earnestness, simplicity, and piety—the exhibition of that Word without any of these pageantries, but in simple truth and decency—will have a great and certain effect upon the minds of those to whom it is presented, and that we shall live to thank God that so great a miracle has been achieved in our day.

One of the most important of the remaining meetings was that of the Colonial Church and School Society, at Freemasons' hall, presided over by Lord Calthorpe, in the absence of Lord Chalmers, president. The income of this society is steadily progressing, and for the year ended 31st March last was 17,264l. The report, after detailing the progress of the society's operations in Canada, amongst the Ojibway and Oneida Indians, and amongst the emancipated negroes of the West Indies, stated that the Episcopate of Dr. Ryan had been productive of great blessings to the Mauritius, and the society's mission to Rupert's Land was about to be resumed at the express request of the Bishop. It went on to say that it had been determined to extend the society's operations for the spiritual welfare of the English on the Continent, a sub-committee had been in operation to carry out the extended scheme, and a special fund had been opened. "The committee have great satisfaction in announcing that they are favoured with the cordial co-operation of the Lord Bishop of London in their arrangements for the nomination of chaplains for the Continent, and that they have already appointed several to important posts under his lordship's immediate sanction." The Bishop of Rupert's Land was one of the principal speakers.

The Grand Duke Constantine, it is announced, will visit the Queen at Osborne. The invitation which was conveyed through Lord Cowley, could hardly have been either omitted or refused; but the terms in which the announcement is phrased appear to imply that the acceptance of it is no more than an act of personal civility to her Majesty, and that he will confine himself to paying his respects to her without making any public appearance. So indefatigable a sight-seer, however, in a land of manufactures and machinery, will probably find total abstinence too hard a trial.

The *Record* announces that the African mail has brought the sad tidings of the death of Dr. Weeks, Bishop of Sierra Leone. He died on the morning of the 25th of March, having only returned to Sierra Leone on the 17th of that month from visiting the stations of the Toruba mission of the Church Missionary Society. The *African*, a Sierra Leone paper, of the 26th of March, gives the following account of the last moments of the departed Bishop:—

It is with a heavy heart that we have to announce to our readers the death of the Right Rev. Dr. Weeks, which took place about a quarter to five yesterday morning. The hopes that were entertained that a return to his own home and the care of friends might contribute to restore his shattered frame have proved vain. He gradually sank from the morning of his landing on the 17th instant, and yielded up his spirit in the hope of seeing Him in whom he had believed. A most touching incident occurred a few hours before his death. He was asked by a friend, "Is the Lord precious to your soul?" A smile lit up the features that were already showing the effects of approaching dissolution, when he deliberately spelt the word "precious," pronouncing each letter distinctly, and then added "very." They were the last words which he was heard to speak, and soon after all that was before the eyes of weeping friends was but the cold and earthly tabernacle of the departed spirit. His career as a Bishop, however short, was memorable. He had established a native ministry. Seven native catechists were admitted by him to the Diaconate in this colony, and four in Abbeokuta. Bishop Vidal was only fourteen months in actual residence in his diocese. Bishop Weeks was some two months longer. The one was struck down while young and full of life and hope; the other had been a veteran in his Master's service, and had in the midst of those to whom his name had been as a household word.

SPAIN.—The reports of a plot on the part of the King to restore the Carlist party to the throne continue to be circulated, founded on a tale that his